

Amendments to the Claims:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended)

A method of incrementally refining queries and updating query results without requiring a user to provide an explicit indicator of query submission, comprising:

defining one or more query related character patterns that do not include an explicit indicator of query submission, wherein at least one of the one or more query related character patterns is a string of characters followed by a predetermined time delay before additional characters are entered;

monitoring entry of query defining characters by a user to detect entry of a defined query related character pattern;

providing the user with one or more suggested query refinement ~~replacement~~ options each time a defined query related character pattern is detected without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission,

the one or more suggested query refinement ~~replacement~~ options including a broadening suggestion,

at least one of the one or more suggested query refinement options (a) the one or more suggested query replacement options beginning with a character pattern other than the query related character pattern, and (b) replace the query related character pattern when selected by the user; and

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providing the user with an updated query result each time a defined query related character pattern is detected without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission.

Claim 2. (Canceled)

Claim 3. (Currently Amended)

The method of claim 1 further comprising tracking results selected by one or more users and adjusting the suggested query refinement ~~replacement~~ options based on a history of results previously selected by the one or more users.

Claim 4. (Original)

The method of claim 1 further comprising tracking results selected by one or more users and adjusting an order of the updated query result list based on a history of results previously selected by the one or more users.

Claim 5. (Original)

The method of claim 1 further comprising providing a visual indicator to the user when an updated query result list is provided to the user.

Claim 6. (Original)

The method of claim 1 wherein one defined query related character pattern is a string of characters followed by a space.

Claims 7-9. (Canceled).

Claim 10. (Original)

The method of claim 1 further comprising providing a user input that allows the user to adjust the query related character patterns.

Claim 11. (Previously presented)

The method of claim 1 further comprising changing the defined query related character patterns in response to a change in a connection speed at a client-server connection used to provide the user with updated query results, wherein the query related character patterns are defined to occur more frequently as the connection speed increases.

Claim 12. (Original)

Computer readable media comprising computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 1.

Claim 13. (Currently Amended)

A method of incrementally refining queries and updating query results without requiring a user to provide an explicit indicator of query submission, comprising:

providing a user with one or more query refinement ~~replacement~~ options as the user enters query defining characters, ~~wherein the one or more query replacement options includes a broadening suggestion, wherein the one or more query replacement options does not begin with the query defining characters;~~

detecting entry of a query defining word by the user without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission; and

providing the user with an updated query result each time entry of a query defining word is detected without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission,

wherein the query defining word includes a string of characters followed by a predetermined time delay before additional characters are entered by the user.

Claim 14. (Currently Amended)

The method of claim 13 further comprising tracking queries entered by one or more users and adjusting the suggested query refinement ~~replacement~~ options based on a history of queries previously entered by the one or more users.

Claim 15. (Currently Amended)

The method of claim 13 further comprising tracking results selected by one or more users and adjusting the suggested query refinement ~~replacement~~ options based on a history of results previously selected by the one or more users.

Claim 16. (Original)

The method of claim 13 further comprising tracking results selected by one or more users and adjusting an order of the updated query result list based on a history of results previously selected by the one or more users.

Claim 17. (Original)

The method of claim 13 wherein one defined query related character pattern is a string of characters followed by a space.

Claims 18-19. (Canceled).

Claim 20. (Original)

Computer readable media comprising computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 13.

Claim 21. (Currently Amended)

A method of incrementally refining queries and updating query results without requiring a user to provide an explicit indicator of query submission, comprising:

- providing a user with replacement alternatives as the user enters query defining characters;

- detecting entry of a completed query defining word by the user, the detecting based on a predetermined time delay following the query defining characters before additional characters are entered by the user;

- providing the user with a query result list each time a query defining word is detected without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission;

- providing the user with query refinement ~~replacement~~ options related to the query defining word without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission, wherein the query refinement ~~replacement~~ options include a broadening suggestion, wherein at least one of the query refinement ~~replacement~~ options does not begin with the query defining word;

- determining ~~whether~~ the user selected [[s]] a provided query refinement ~~replacement~~ option;

- providing the user with an updated query result list, repsonive to the determining the user selected a provided query refinement option, ~~when it is determined that the user has selected a provided query replacement option;~~ and

- providing a visual indicator to the user each time the updated query result list is provided to the user.

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Claim 22. (Canceled).

Claim 23. (Original)

The method of claim 21 wherein the updated query result list includes result listings from a user hard drive, an intranet server, and an internet server.

Claim 24. (Original)

Computer readable media comprising computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 21.

Claim 25. (Currently Amended)

In a computer system including a display, a user input facility, and an application for presenting a user interface on the display, a user interface that updates query results without requiring a user to provide an explicit indicator of query submission comprising:

- a query entry text box for entering query defining characters;

- a query refinement option list including at least one user selectable query ~~refinement~~ ~~replacement~~ option that is incrementally updated as a query is entered into the query entry text box without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission, wherein the incremental updating of the query refinement option list is based on a predetermined time delay following the entry of query defining characters before additional characters are entered by the user, wherein the user selectable query ~~refinement~~ ~~replacement~~ option includes a broadening suggestion, and wherein the at least one query ~~refinement~~ ~~replacement~~ option begins with characters other than the query defining characters;

- a query result list that is incrementally updated as a query is entered into the query entry text box without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission; and

- a visual indicator that indicates when the query result list is updated.

Claim 26. (Canceled).

Claim 27. (Original)

The user interface of claim 25 further comprising a user selectable search icon for manually executing a query defined by characters in the query entry text box.

Claim 28. (Currently Amended)

The user interface of claim 25 wherein the query refinement ~~replacement~~ option list is semi-transparent.

Claim 29. (Original)

The user interface of claim 25 wherein the query result list is animated for a predetermined period of time after the query result list is updated.

Claim 30. (Currently Amended)

A system for incrementally refining queries and updating query results without requiring a user to provide an explicit indicator of query submission, comprising:

- a user input device enabling input of query defining text characters;
- a display;
- a data content that is searchable;
- a network connection for accessing at least a portion of the data content;
- a memory in which machine instructions are stored; and

a processor that is coupled to the user input device, to the display, to the data content, to the network connection, and to the memory, the processor executing the machine instructions to carry out a plurality of functions, including:

defining one or more query related character patterns that do not include an explicit indicator of query submission, wherein at least one of the one or more query related character patterns is a string of characters followed by a predetermined time delay before additional characters are entered;

monitoring entry of query defining characters by a user to detect entry of a defined query related character pattern;

searching the data content and providing the user with an updated query result when a defined query related character pattern is detected without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission;

providing the user with query refinement ~~replacement~~ options related to the detected defined query related character pattern without requiring the user to provide the explicit indicator of query submission, wherein at least one of the query replacement options include a broadening suggestion, and wherein the broadening suggestion begins with a character pattern that is different from the query related character pattern; and

changing the defined query related character patterns in response to a change in a connection speed at the network connection, the query related character patterns are defined to occur more frequently as the connection speed increases.

Claim 31. (Original)

The system of claim 30 wherein the searchable database resides on one or more remote computers and data used to define the one or more query related character patterns resides on a user terminal.

Claim 32. (Original)

The system of claim 30 wherein the data content includes data stored on a user hard drive, data stored on an intranet server, and data stored on an internet server.

Claim 33. (Previously Presented)

The method of claim 1 wherein the broadening suggestion further includes a broadening icon.

Claim 34. (Currently Amended)

The method of claim 13 wherein ~~wherein~~ the broadening suggestion further includes a broadening icon.

Claim 35. (Currently Amended)

The method of claim 21 wherein ~~wherein~~ the broadening suggestion further includes a broadening icon.

Claim 36. (Previously Presented)

The user interface of claim 25 wherein the broadening suggestion further includes a broadening icon.

Claim 37. (Previously Presented)

The system of claim 30 wherein the broadening suggestion further includes a broadening icon.

Claim 38. (Previously Presented)

The system of claim 1 wherein the broadening suggestion does not include the query related character pattern.

Claim 39. (Currently Amended)

The system of claim 1 further comprising:

replacing the one or more query related character patterns with at least one of the one or more suggested query refinement ~~replacement~~ options.

Claim 40. (New)

The method of claim 13 wherein the one or more query refinement options includes a broadening suggestion, and wherein at least one of the one or more query refinement options (a) does not begin with the query defining characters, and (b) replaces the query related character pattern when the at least one of the one or more query refinement options is selected by the user.

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